

# Views on Military Preparedness as Modified by the Texas Campaign

COLONEL MILTON J. FOREMAN  
MAJOR ABEL DAVIS

From the proceedings of the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Meeting of  
The Commercial Club of Chicago, at The Blackstone,  
Saturday Evening, December 9, 1916



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## ADDRESSES

PRESENTING AN OBSERVATION OF THE RECENT MOBILI-  
ZATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF THE  
UNITED STATES ON THE BORDER,  
WITH LESSONS DRAWN  
THEREFROM

BY

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## THE COMMERCIAL CLUB OF CHICAGO

THE COMMERCIAL CLUB, ORGANIZED 1887  
THE MERCHANTS CLUB, ORGANIZED 1896  
UNITED 1907

CHICAGO, December 18, 1916.

**S**HORTLY before the mobilization of the National Guard on the border the Commercial Club of Chicago invited officers of Chicago regiments to address the members on the all-important subject of national defense. The Club had already obtained from Major General Leonard A. Wood the view of the regular army.

Following the return of the Chicago troops from the border the Club, at its meeting of December 9, 1916, invited Colonel Milton J. Foreman of the First Cavalry, Illinois National Guard, and Major Abel Davis of the First Infantry, Illinois National Guard, to give their views on military preparedness as modified by the Texas campaign.

The Commercial Club, as an organization embracing the large commercial interests of Chicago, the desire of which is to promote in every way possible the well-being of the community and of the nation, had co-operated with the Chicago regiments both before and during the mobilization. This troop movement had, for the first time, brought the Guardsmen together in number. It had given the officers of the Guard an opportunity to see what the country could expect of the state troops in case of war. The members of the Club desired to inform themselves as to the opinion

resulting from this demonstration of the strength and weakness of our present system with a view to aiding in the creation of a rational military system in place of the chaotic condition now existing.

The addresses of Colonel Foreman and of Major Davis contain observations and suggestions of value. They have been reprinted in this booklet for distribution in the hope that they will help bring to the public a clearer understanding of the difficulties and possibilities of the problem now confronting all Americans.

JAS. B. FORGAN,  
*President.*

## MAJOR ABEL DAVIS

*First Infantry, Illinois National Guard*

THE RECENT experience of our Government on the Mexican border demonstrated the essential weaknesses of our military system. I shall attempt to point these out, indicate some of the contributing causes and make bold to suggest a plan for a military system. It is dignifying these suggestions to refer to them in the aggregate as "a plan." Any thorough plan for a military system must take into consideration not only strictly military matters, but industrial conditions as they may affect our military policy. I shall make no reference to the necessary changes in our industrial organization in aid of our military requirements, nor shall I speak of the facilities for producing a greater number of army officers, and the organization of our forces, and their division into the different arms of the service. Neither shall I speak of any plan for the equipment of the army; the required number of field guns, aeroplanes, poison gas generators and other machinery of war, essential for military operations. The only feature of the general plan to be presented by me is the one dealing with the military training of our men and the raising of men in required number for the army of the United States.

I shall refer to the recent mobilization only as it emphasizes the weakness of the system. Our regiment, the First Illinois Infantry, answered the call of the President and reported at Fort Sam Houston. The experience gained by the regiment in Texas was valuable, but the time, energy and money expended did not produce in results the possible maximum.

The following were the chief contributing causes:

- (1) Excessive number of recruits, totally without military training.
- (2) Lack of army officers detailed as instructors.
- (3) Lack of a definite plan for training National Guard troops for war service.
- (4) Lack of facilities for handling the large bodies of National Guardsmen called into the federal service.
- (5) The cumbersome and wasteful method of changing the status of troops from state to federal control and their return to state control.

(1) It has been the theory of our Government to have the army and the National Guard organized on a skeleton basis, known as peace strength, which in time of war was to be increased to regular size or war strength. As a matter of actual experience neither the army nor the National Guard has ever succeeded in recruiting up to peace strength, with the result that the addition of untrained men is greater than contemplated in theory, with a proportionate lowering of the efficiency of the fighting unit.

The numerical strength of the First Infantry was 1,200, of which number 500 were inexperienced recruits, enlisted subsequent to the President's call. Had we been able to comply with the wishes of the War Department to recruit the regiment to war strength, as it was then known, we would have had 700 recruits in a regiment of 1,400, or one untrained man for every trained, or, to be more accurate, partially trained man. While the units of European armies are increased in strength in time of war, such increase is at a much lower ratio than ours and is entirely of trained men from the reserves. We, on the other hand, have placed reliance on the willingness of men to respond in war time, ignoring the fact that patriotism, although expressed by willingness to serve, will not and cannot take the place of that essential training which fits men for war service.



The ultimate object of all military training is to produce the highest degree of efficiency on the firing line; obedience to orders in face of death—an obedience unquestioning and instantaneous. Production of this efficiency has become more difficult as war has become more terrifying. The half-trained recruit who would have done well in '61 would be useless and dangerous in modern warfare. This being true, for us to continue to rely on untrained men, no matter how great their number, is suicidal.

(2) There was one regular army officer with the rank of captain detailed as instructor for our entire brigade, consisting of approximately 3,600 men. To my knowledge he had any number of days with eighteen working hours. He supervised the administrative work of the brigade and its regiments, provided drill schedules, arranged manoeuvres, made inspections. But his incessant labors were not productive of great results because of the superhuman task assigned to him.

(3) Such benefit as the National Guard received from the last mobilization was in spite of the failure of the Government to provide a definite program of training. Each army officer acting as instructor was obliged to exercise his own judgment and ingenuity in such limited instruction as was within his power to give.

(4) Army and National Guard officers were further handicapped by lack of facilities. The best illustration is our experience with target practice for recruits. The Government maintains a very good rifle range at Leon Springs, Texas, equipped to meet the requirements of regular troops stationed at Fort Sam Houston. But did it serve the large number of National Guardsmen mobilized at the fort? Though we were away from our home station for three months and sixteen days it was not possible to allow our regiment more than three days on the range. Because of the congestion practice had to be limited in all regiments to men who had had no previous experience in this important branch of military knowledge. Two hours was the

actual time spent by each recruit in trying to hit the target. Hardly sufficient to qualify him as an effective man on the firing line.

(5) Over one-third of the time my regiment was away from its home station was spent in mustering it into and out of the federal service. Work during this period was nearly impossible. The criticism heaped upon the shoulders of the regular army mustering officers was unjust. They were following the system incorporated into a law which demanded—a cumbersome and unnecessary provision—that every piece of property belonging to the National Guard while in the state service be invoiced to the federal Government at the time of muster and its serviceability noted. Likewise, on mustering out, each piece of property had to be invoiced back to the state, its condition being noted at the time of such transfer. Incidental to this property reckoning between the federal and state governments, each accountable officer had to clear his account with the federal and state governments.

In the same way every man who had been found by a medical examination to be physically fit for state service was re-examined to discover if he was fit for federal service. On being mustered out he was examined again. The Government refused to rely on state examinations and justified the last examination as necessary to ascertaining the man's condition as it might affect his claim for a pension.

I have too much regard for your patience to drag you into the maze of difficulties regarding the oaths which the men have taken, should have taken, or are expected to take at this time, except to say this: The men who have returned from the border do not know the meaning of an additional oath at this time, nor understand its necessity. Many conflicting interpretations have been given them regarding the effect of the latest oath. We tell them to exercise their own judgment regarding taking it and they prefer to wait.

These are some of the difficulties which fell to the lot of the National Guardsmen who responded to a call to duty.

On top of this they returned to their homes to find that, in some quarters at least, there is dissatisfaction with their conduct and even with their existence. Before sufficient time had elapsed for an analysis of the situation the cry was heard in many places for the abolition of the National Guard—the volunteer system must go—let us have compulsory universal service.

The remedy prescribed is not specific, is not based on a thorough diagnosis and may hurt the patient. It represents the mental habit of the country—inpatient, volatile: demanding snap judgment and quick acting remedies.

This attitude of the public mind has asserted itself in other phases of our municipal, state and national existence. In our own city we had a striking example of a man being elected to office on a platform of immediate municipal ownership and operation of our complicated transportation facilities, when as a matter of fact we did not know then, and do not know now, how to operate successfully the elevators of the city hall.

Displeasure at the failure of legislators to respond to the popular clamor for certain legislation brought forth a demand for the initiative and referendum and in certain states the incorporation of the principle in the state constitution.

Dissatisfaction with certain individual judges and the refusal of others to usurp the function of the lawmakers was responsible for the legal heresy of recall of judicial decisions and of the judges themselves.

And now it is "compulsory universal military service" and the twin brother, "the abolition of the National Guard."

I am not for compulsory universal military service in the sense in which the term implies that every young man of a certain age be taken away from school or work for a period of a year or two, put under arms and made a part of a huge standing army. I do favor a system which will compel every young man to undertake a certain amount of military training and will furnish the United States, not with

a hired standing army, but with a *National Army*; an army consisting of all classes of people, and of a size which our military experts, the general staff of the army, may determine from time to time to be adequate.

Here are some concrete suggestions which, in my opinion, should be incorporated in a plan for the military establishment of the United States, and for the navy, with such modifications as that service may require.

Active service in Cuba in 1898 as a member of my regiment, continued service and observation during the last nineteen years, and consultation with National Guardsmen and army officers, serve as a basis for the plan, the principal features of which are the following:

(1) The military forces of the United States shall consist of:

- (a) National Army—the first line.
- (b) National Guard—the second line.
- (c) Reserve—the third line.

(2) Every young man shall, upon the first day of July succeeding his nineteenth birthday, report to the United States Government officials in his congressional district for registration and examination. Each congressional district shall constitute a military administrative district.

All young men who, after strict medical examination by United States surgeons, are found to be physically unfit for service, shall be excused and their names stricken from the lists.

All young men who are found, by governmental investigation, to be the sole support of families shall also be excused from service with the first and second lines and shall go in the reserve in the first instance.

(3) All men registered as qualified shall be listed in one of two classes:

Class One: The first class shall consist of men who voluntarily put themselves in the way of securing a prescribed course of military training. The first class shall be divided as follows:

- (a) Men who shall at time of registration or prior thereto have become members of National Guard organizations approved by the War Department.
- (b) Men who have had two years of military training in a military school or academy approved by the War Department, or men who shall, at the time of registration or prior thereto, have entered or agreed in writing to enter, the military corps of colleges or universities approved by the War Department, and agreed to take a prescribed course of military training of not less than two years.

Class Two: The second class shall include all men on the qualified list who are not included in Class One. From Class Two recruits for the National Army shall be drawn in the first instance.

(4) The War Department shall designate yearly the number of recruits required for the National Army in each congressional district, such recruits to be selected by lot from members of the second class, opportunity first being given for voluntary enlistment. If there is not a sufficient number in the second class the required number shall be drawn from the first class to fill the quota.

(5) The term of service in the National Army shall be two years on the active list and thereafter in the reserve.

(6) All members of the second class who shall not be mustered into the National Army shall become part of the reserve, as shall all members of the first class upon the completion of their respective prescribed courses of training.

(7) Different grades of reserve shall be established, the grade depending on the nature of military service and experience. The reserves shall be organized into military units with officers from the active or reserve lists. Each year for a brief period the military commander of each congressional district shall call the members of the reserve to the colors. The following divisions of the reserve shall be made:

- Reserve A: Men who have served two years in the National Army, or first line.
- Reserve B: Men who have served the required enlistment in National Guard organizations.
- Reserve C: Men who have received the required training in military schools, colleges and universities.
- Reserve D: Men who have been placed in the reserve without training.
- Reserve E: Men who are under training for quartermaster, commissary, hospital, technical and electrical service.
- Reserve F: Men excused for physical disability. This reserve would remain unorganized and not subject to training, unless war were declared.

(8) Failure to complete a course of enlistment of three years in the National Guard or two years of training in schools, colleges and universities in accordance with rules laid down by the War Department shall transfer a man from first to second class.

(9) Penalties shall be provided for evasion of enlistment.

Now, what are the advantages of the plan suggested? I shall point them out somewhat in detail.

In the first place, every one except the physically unfit would receive military training in the army, the National Guard, schools, colleges, or the reserves.

In the second place the plan would give the country an ever changing citizen army drawn on a fair and equitable basis from every class. It is presumable that a great many men would prefer to receive their training in the schools or National Guard, rather than in the National Army. While the expense of attending schools and college would deprive certain young men of military training at such institutions, service in the National Guard is open to all, rich and poor.

Should the number preferring such voluntary service

in the Guard or instruction in schools be so great as to leave the remainder in the second class, the class primarily available for service in the National Army, inadequate to the needs of the army, the draft which would be made upon the schools and the Guard would be made by lot, impartially between the two.

A hired mercenary army has no place in a free republic. Besides experience has shown the inability of the Government to attract enough men for an army of the required size. Our Government has gone to extremes and has employed methods which would not be countenanced by reputable business houses in advertising the attractiveness of service in the regular army as it is now constituted. The fact that the Government is refusing to release men now in Texas whose term of enlistment has expired shows this to be a time of necessity when the army should be recruited to its full strength. And yet the present strength of the army is 35,000 below the authorized number. The Government cannot get the men.

The flexibility of the plan is one of its features. The army becomes smaller or grows larger as international conditions appear to warrant. At the present time there can be no change in the size of the army without the enactment of special legislation. There is no time for such an enactment in an emergency. On the other hand, in case of a limitation of armies throughout the world, the American army could readily be reduced in accordance with the plan.

The general staff of the army has estimated that for our purposes an army of 500,000 is required at this time. Two years' enlistment in the National Army would make the yearly requirement 250,000 men. There are 435 congressional districts. The yearly quota per district, therefore, would be but 500 men, a number so small as to make the interference with our industrial affairs negligible.

The cost of maintaining a military establishment of the kind suggested would, of course, be considerably lower than the cost incident to a plan putting every man of a certain

age with the colors for a period of two years. Under any plan thoughtful consideration will prompt a decision in favor of a two years' term of enlistment in the National Army in order to give the country a good sized body of seasoned troops. It is estimated that between 900,000 and 1,000,000 men yearly reach the age of nineteen. Making allowance for the physically unfit and for other losses, we would have a standing army of at least 1,500,000 if all were called into the first line. It is further estimated that the army costs our Government, on a yearly basis, \$1,000 per man. This would make the cost of maintaining such an army \$1,500,000,000—an outlay for which we are not prepared. Under my plan approximately only every fourth man would go into the National Army. The others would receive their training in the National Guard, schools, colleges and universities at a much lower cost.

An important feature of the plan is the one which puts into the reserves all the able-bodied men of the country. The successful termination of a military conflict depends not only on the men in active service ready to take the field on short notice, but on the size of the reserve ready to take the place of the wastage in battle. The reserve to be effective must have not only individual, but what is more important, organizational training.

Necessity in the first instance compelled Germany to realize the value of her reserve. When at Jena Napoleon shattered the Prussian army, he sought protection for the future by compelling Prussia to agree to limit its army to 42,000 men. The illustrious Scharnhorst, without arousing Napoleon's suspicions, conceived the idea of replacing one group of young men, after a short service, with another group. The men leaving the army were carried by him as a reserve.

Six years elapsed after the treaty of Tilsit and when 1813 came, Prussia, with a population of five million inhabitants, mobilized, in evasion of the restrictions incorporated in the Tilsit Treaty by Napoleon, 300,000 soldiers,



250,000 of whom were the reserve created by Scharnhorst's genius.

Today the reserves of Germany are contributing to her military successes as Scharnhorst's reserves did to the defeat of Napoleon. In fact, under the supreme test of today, the reserve system has proved to be Germany's greatest strength.

Without discussing the different kinds of reserve troops and the transition from one state of reserve to another, I will bring to your attention the following tabulation which shows the number of fully trained reserves passing from peace to war footing as a part of the European armies at the beginning of the present war :

France .....	2,300,000
Germany .....	4,000,000
Austria .....	1,600,000
Russia .....	3,800,000
Italy .....	1,250,000

There is no necessity at this time for estimating the size of our reserve, but, under the plan, all would be in the reserve and would receive such training as would make them useful soldiers.

Particular emphasis should be placed upon the fact that the appointment of a military commander for each congressional district would enable a register of all reserves to be kept up to the hour, with statistical information as to age, ability, line of service and other essentials, and above all, would enable the call of reserves to the colors to be enforced within a few hours, a matter of the first importance in war.

These positions would furnish useful employment for officers of the National Army who might otherwise be retired.

As to schools: Since it would be the expectation of parents that in one way or another their sons would be called upon to undergo a course of military training, the parents would exercise their influence in providing a course

of military training in all our schools and colleges. The by-products of military training in the school cannot be over-estimated. They are courage, self-reliance, obedience, responsibility and practical patriotism. Such training, though primarily for military use, must react with even greater benefit upon our civil life in an increased physical, moral and mental manliness and a higher standard of citizenship.

Finally—a point which on a casual reading might not seem of great importance—the general disinclination of young men to serve in the National Army, as evidenced by their almost unanimous refusal to volunteer for such service, would automatically fill the ranks of National Guard, school and college military organizations, thus enabling the War Department to prescribe a thorough course of military training and to penalize any institution or organization that did not maintain the standard, by striking it from the list of approved military bodies, service in which would exempt a young man from conscription into the National Army.

Because of this the plan would encourage enlistment in the National Guard and strengthen it in every way. We must at this point, therefore, answer the question: “Do we want a National Guard?” I, for one, feel strongly the necessity of preserving the institution of the Guard. It has proved its usefulness as an arm of the state in insuring domestic tranquility. What, I ask, would we do without the Guard in times of industrial outbreak? What would we have done at the time of the Springfield race riots? Then 5,000 Guardsmen put a stop to disorder and saved both property and lives. What, again, would we have done at the time of the Cairo floods? We must have the Guard. Without it dozens of outbreaks would occur that are now restrained by the existence of the Guard.

With a higher degree of efficiency, such as this plan would give it, the National Guard would rise to a broader field of usefulness to the state. But take away from the Guard its standing as a part of the federal army in case of war, and relegate it to the position of a state police force, and I say to you there will be no National Guard.

The criticism that training in the National Guard regiments has been inefficient and failed to produce trained men is silenced by the provision suggested that all such training shall be under the supervision of the War Department and that only such men shall be exempt from the compulsory feature of the law as have received training in National Guard organizations whose course of training and standard of efficiency bear the approval of the War Department.

Let the federal Government equip the National Guard; let the equipment remain the property of the United States; let the accountability be direct from the regimental accountable officer to the federal Government, eliminating the necessity of transfer back and forth when the Guard is called into federal service; let the Government supervise in the first instance the physical examination of recruits; let army officers, at least one to a battalion, be detailed to the National Guard as instructors in times of peace; let there be a definite plan for intensive training of the National Guard when called into service; let provision be made in advance for all matters incident to mobilization; let ample facilities be provided for the handling of large bodies of volunteer troops—and the National Guard with its demonstrated desire for service, will be an efficient and effective part of the military establishment of the United States.

I have stated the essentials of the plan and attempted to point out its effect. I now submit this plan to your thoughtful consideration. A plan, incomplete as to details, but insofar as fallible judgment may be trusted, a plan elastic, economical, practical; a plan that is in keeping with the fundamentals which the forefathers wrote into the constitution; a plan that does not confound mercenary allegiance with the great force of patriotic sentiment.



## COLONEL MILTON J. FOREMAN

*First Cavalry, Illinois National Guard*

IN CONSIDERING the subject presented for discussion tonight and before touching upon an exposition of what it involves, in order to arrive at any conclusion, inconclusive as it may be, it is necessary to pay some attention to what has happened since the National Defense Act, the so-called Hay bill, was passed, and how well founded some of the statements and conclusions are that have been born of the passage of that act, and the Mexican border duty of the National Guard.

When last I had the privilege of addressing this Club there were two military bills under consideration in the House and Senate Committees of Congress. It will be recalled that each body finally passed its own bill and that in conference a deadlock ensued. It will be further remembered that the major and really the only important difference between the two bills related to what the authorized strength of the Regular Army should be.

As I recall it, the House conferees favored a standing army of something over one hundred thousand men, while the Senate bill provided for an army of nearly three times that number. The conferees finally agreed upon an army of one hundred and eighty-five thousand men, the increase to be obtained in five annual increments, and in that form the bill was finally passed and became a law on June 3, 1916.

Prior to the passage of that act, sometime in the early Spring of 1916, Congress, at the request of the President of the United States, passed an act authorizing and directing that the then existing units of the Army be enlisted to war strength, a total increase of twenty-six thousand men.

Neither at the time of the passage of this act nor in the debates on the act of June 3rd, either in the House or Senate, was enforced service in the regular army discussed or touched upon.

After the so-called Continental Army scheme was thrown into the scrap pile with the unanimous approval of everybody but the then Secretary of War, it was proposed to develop a second line force by federalizing the National Guard by placing it under the control of the War Department and under the command of the President of the United States; and the militia provisions of the National Defense Act of June 3rd are the results of these proposals. These provisions were viciously and bitterly opposed on the following grounds:

First: It was urged that the so-called federalizing of the National Guard would never make it a force available or dependable in time of national need, because instead of having one supreme commander in the President of the United States, it would have forty-eight in the persons of the governors of the several states, and that each one would determine for himself whether the call of the President should be obeyed.

Second: It was claimed that if the President called on the National Guard for war duty and the governors acquiesced, the members of the Guard would refuse to respond to the call.

Let us see what the facts are, and in discussing them I propose to confine myself to things historically demonstrated. I shall not indulge in speculation or prophecy.

The National Defense Act naturally divides itself into two parts; that relating to the regular army, and that relating to the National Guard.

The two parts could well have been passed as separate acts because they are not dependent upon or in any way connected with one another.

Let us assume that they were separate acts, and that the Regular Army Act provided for as large a number of

soldiers for the regular army as the most extreme of the "large army" men advocated. Would the result since the passage of the bill have been different so far as the regular army is concerned? The act, so far as it relates to the regular army, was satisfactory to everybody except in regard to size. So bearing in mind that when the act was considered, there was no hint or suggestion that the regular army should be recruited except by voluntary enlistment, no intimation of the desirability or necessity of enforced service, it must be admitted that the law, so far as the regular army is concerned, has failed to secure the desired number of soldiers, and although thousands of dollars were spent in advertising and other propaganda, neither the authorized increment, nor the twenty-six thousand men authorized in the earlier act were obtained.

I ask you to remember that this section has nothing to do with, and that its failure cannot be imputed to, the militia sections of the act.

As a matter of fact, new units of the regular army were formed under the National Defense Act by the simple expedient of taking their components from old organizations. For example, the Sixteenth Cavalry was made by taking part of the body of the Third Cavalry; and the Thirty-sixth Infantry was made by taking part of the body of the Fourth Infantry, and that was the rule wherever new units were created.

The regular army features must stand by themselves. They have failed and that failure is the failure of the army to secure the men.

Now let us pass to the portion of the act which has been most vigorously and viciously attacked, namely the federalizing of the National Guard. As I stated before, those opposing the federalizing of the National Guard and the payment of its members, did so upon two general grounds; first, that the President of the United States could not exert the necessary authority over forty-eight governors, who nominally controlled the Guard of the several states,

and second, that when a call came for war service the members of the National Guard would not respond. Let us consider the facts.

The National Defense Act became effective on the 3rd day of June, 1916. About the 16th of June, or thirteen days after it became a law, the President of the United States called on the governors of the several states for the services of the National Guard for Mexican border duty, and in response to that call more than one hundred and thirty thousand men dropped their civilian pursuits, reported at their armories and were sent to mobilization camps as fast as transportation could be provided. From the moment they reported at the mobilization camps the authority of the governor automatically ceased, and they became subject to the authority of the President through officers detailed by the War Department. One hundred thousand of the men were sent to Texas practically at once, and the balance impatiently waited at the various mobilization camps. These facts are incontrovertible, because they actually occurred, and they completely disprove the claim with respect to conflict of authority between the President and the governors and the assertion that the Guard would not respond to a call.

Now, what are the further facts, on which I speak only from the experience of my regiment. From the moment we reached the mobilization camp at Springfield, we were directly and solely under the control of officers of the United States Army. We had, as National Guardsmen, sworn to obey the commands of the President of the United States, but in the ceremony of mustering us into the service of the United States a second oath was administered. Every man except eight bandsmen took that oath, and asked no questions as to his obligation under the oath or the length or character of the service. When we were on border duty on the Rio Grande, certain authorized appointments in the commissioned personnel of the regiment were made and it became necessary that the appointees be mustered into the federal service, as we had been mustered in at Springfield



I was directed to send our muster rolls to the chief mustering officer at Fort Brown, and after a week or ten days of investigation I was told that the officers could not be mustered in. The chief mustering officer said, "You were given the wrong oath at Springfield and you have no status." I replied that we were mustered in under an oath given us by the United States Army officer in charge of our muster in, to which he replied that, be that as it might, we had taken the wrong oath and therefore had no status, and not only could we not muster in any more officers, but we had several more than we were entitled to. He said, "You are neither National Guard, Organized Militia or National Defense Act troops." I pointed out that we had been under exclusive control and command of the War Department since June 16, 1916, that we had been doing military duty on the banks of the Rio Grande for several months. All of this he allowed was true, but even that would not invest us with status. In other words even though thirteen days had elapsed from the time the National Defense Act became a law it had not been put into force and effect so far as the National Guard was concerned, and we had been called out by the President under the power conferred on him by the Constitution, and not under the National Defense Act. More than one hundred thousand National Guardsmen responded to the call and performed efficiently the duties to which they were assigned. Does that look like failure? Which is the greater failure, the record of the regular army made under the National Defense Act, or that of the National Guard in response to the call for border duty?

Let us remember that the National Guard has not up to this time been either governed or trained under the National Defense Act. Who knows what it will do for us or with us? For all that we know it may produce everything we hope, but it should have a chance to be tried out. It is being interpreted by unfriendly men and unfriendly minds and it should not be judged and sentenced until it has at least been tried. Ah, they say, look at the huge sum of money

wasted on paying the National Guard. This "monumental failure" of one hundred and thirty thousand men, partly trained though it was, was sufficiently trained so that in a comparatively short time the greater part of its units could perform all the duties that were required of them as second line troops.

With respect to the pay of the National Guard, the Government is in exactly the same situation as the man who complained to a friend one morning: "I don't know what to do about my wife. Every morning she begs and pleads for money until I am about crazy." "What does she do with all the money?" asked the friend. "I don't know," was the reply, "I haven't given her any yet."

Not a single dollar has been paid to the National Guard as compensation under the National Defense Act. Ah, but they say, your men won't enlist again. They are refusing to take the new oath. The men took one oath when they enlisted in the National Guard, and another when they were mustered into the United States service. Some of them think it is almost as many oaths as ought to be administered, inasmuch as they are ready to carry out their contracts of enlistment under either oath. But I don't know what they will do, because we have been unable to get any enlistment blanks, although we have made many requests for them.

When the First Illinois Cavalry returned from the Rio Grande it was sent to Fort Sheridan, Illinois. Six or seven army officers were detailed for the muster out of the regiment. This ceremony held twelve hundred men in camp under Government pay and subsistence for four full weeks, not to speak of the loss to employers, who were paying the men, and to the men themselves. And this was not under the National Defense Act.

So we find that while the regular army has failed to secure the troops provided by the National Defense Act, the National Guard, which did not have the benefits of the act, produced over one hundred and thirty thousand men for duty in a national crisis which was supposed to be im-

minent. Ah, but it is said, look at the men who should not have gone. Think of the suffering of the deserted wives and children. Perhaps that is true. Perhaps there were men who, in view of their responsibilities, should not have been subjected to the burden. I think that of my regiment perhaps fifteen per cent might well have been left at home. Most of the dependent applications, however, did not come from wives, but from parents, many of whom were beyond the pale of ordinary dependency. As a matter of fact one lawyer practicing in Chicago, whose father is rated at three-quarters of a million, secured his discharge on dependency grounds.

We are all agreed that some stable form of adequate military defense must be devised, some plan by which the burdens of service are equally distributed.

The first thing we require is a regular army which shall be equal to the first line troops of any country of which we may become the adversary. Such troops cannot be secured by magic. They can only be produced by hard, constant, continuous training. We should first determine how large a regular army we want, and it should be large enough to handle a situation such as confronted Washington when the National Guard was called to the Mexican border, and leave enough men so that our coast defenses and insular possessions will not be entirely denuded of soldiers.

Having determined the question of the size of the first line, we are at once face to face with the fact that, even in the numbers now authorized, we have been unable to get soldiers for the regular army, and we must look for a method of obtaining them. One of two courses seems to be inevitable. We must make service in the army a competitive occupation with civil pursuits, or we must have conscription.

If we adopt the former course we are confronted first by the danger of making our regular military establishment a mercenary army, an army of Hessians, who are stimulated by no patriotic impulses, by no love of country, but by the

money that is in it; and second, by an expense bill which will be so large that it might make general training impossible.

If we resort to conscription we are threatened with the troubles which other countries have encountered which have attempted this course. Whether the agitation against conscription will become so virulent as to seriously hamper and, perhaps, destroy the growing sentiment for general military training and service, is a guess which only the future can solve.

What comes then? Some of the proponents of the many plans for general or universal training or service, or of partial training or service, are apparently blind to the fact that we cannot maintain an army large enough for all exigencies, and that back of the first line there must be a second line that has been organizationally trained, which may be instantly placed in the field and quickly fitted to support the first line troops if the circumstances require.

There are those who advocate the elimination of the National Guard as an element of national defense, and they urge as a reason that the expenditure of money on the National Guard means that the general military training of the youth of the country will be interfered with by reason of the expenditures necessary to maintain it.

Let us assume that the National Guard is eliminated and that we have a regular army only large enough for our ordinary peace purposes. I understand there is no agreement among those who are active in these matters as to just the length of time that men should be trained. For example, in a speech before the National Security League, Captain Cosby, according to the newspaper reports, proposed as follows:

“The actual service consists of only four years’ work between the ages of 18 and 23, during the first of which the young man has two months’ intensive training in camp and two weeks in each of the other three years, making only fourteen weeks actual service during four years.”

Colonel Roosevelt, on the other hand, advocates universal *service* as distinguished from universal *training*.

General S. M. B. Young, U. S. A., urges a year of continuous training.

Suppose an actual situation arose such as Washington believed existed on the Mexican border, or suppose an emergency were to arise on the coast line of the United States. How long would it take to bring these young men together and to organize them into effective units? The organizational training would take longer than individual training, and without organizational training they would be useless. And what would we or our enemies be doing while we were constructing our organizations. If we can produce in the United States a quarter of a million organized troops, such as went to the Mexican border, with the training which is provided by the National Defense Act, amplified or increased as may be found necessary, we will have a second line force that can be made first line troops in a very short time.

We then come to consider how many young men we can safely and adequately handle in a general training or service scheme. The extent of the training and the number to be trained, and the method of selecting that number, must be determined so that the financial and economic burden shall be not so great as to endanger continued military training.

When a young man goes into training he must be treated as an individual. His military capacity must not be developed at the expense of his morals or manhood. He should not be made merely a part of a military machine. Only so many men ought to be taken as can be handled with advantage and safety to themselves and to the country.

Manifestly we cannot embark in this most important enterprise—the most critical adventure in which this country has ever embarked—unless we know what we are doing. Before we build a building, we must be certain of our foundation. Our foundational trouble is our army organization. Whether it is due to bureau rule, or what not, I state

no opinion, but the fact remains that a general staff that is subject to continual changes, a new chief of staff every four years, and a war college that changes every now and then, with no definite fixed determinations of policy and procedure, cannot produce a military system worth having. The first thing we must do, therefore, is to make the organization of the directing element stable and permanent, so that a policy, when once determined, shall be wisely and logically prosecuted.

How shall we decide what course to pursue? What plan shall we adopt? Every organization has its own solution; army officers, magazine writers and many others have written tomes and tomes of solutions. And if we adopt any one of them, who shall be responsible for failure? This is a national question, and it means a mobilization of the patriotism and the resources and the capacity and the brains of this country.

Officers of the army, no matter how capable or experienced they may be, are not able to formulate such a policy as will properly provide for the mobilization of the elements necessary for the nation's defense or the training of its civilian population. This involves the social, economic and political elements of our population. The strategic and tactical features and the actual training may well be left to soldiers, but the solution of the problem itself is much greater than its single military feature.

Manifestly no military legislation that is worth while can be produced at the present short session of Congress. Let a commission be appointed by the President of the United States; to consist of officers of the army of the United States of experience and judgment, of members of both houses of Congress, representatives of the Organized Militia of the United States, and a sufficient number of civilians adequately to represent the social and industrial life of the country. Let this commission during the year 1917 pursue an exhaustive investigation into every phase of our military and defense problems. Let it make a comprehensive report to

Congress in December, 1917, which will make recommendations for specific legislation. We have tariff commissions, and currency commissions, and commissions to investigate and control everything imaginable, except the one subject which is most important to our national life and of which we know least.

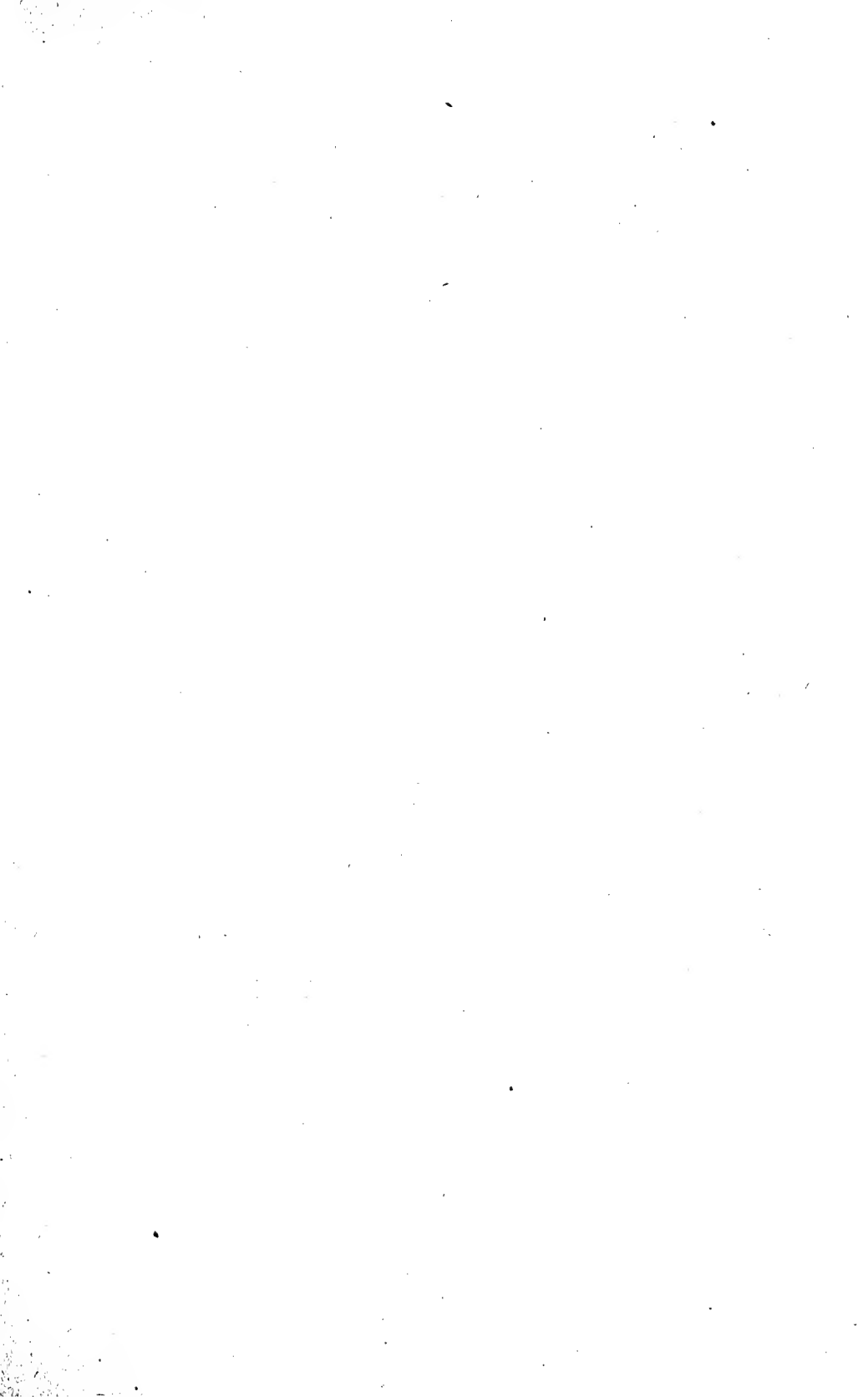
The recommendation of a commission of brave, patriotic, unselfish men of character will command the respect and confidence of the country, and their recommendation will have the support of the people. It is a time for investigation and consideration. We cannot do anything without the support of the country. We are not entitled to the support of the country unless the programme which is presented is the calm, cool result of the judgment of men who have given it their careful, unremitting, unselfish study and attention, and whose capacity and patriotic impulses and purposes cannot be questioned.



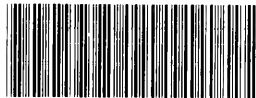








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